

Dutchess County Office for the Aging's

AGING NEWS

For the week of October 25th

Note: the Office for the Aging is closed on Tuesday, November 2nd, for Election

Day. OFA Home Delivered Meals clients will receive their meals in advance of the holiday.

OCTOBER IS HEALTH LITERACY MONTH

Health information can be notoriously difficult to understand. Well-intended communications can be loaded with medical terminology and fine print. It's easy to get confused even when it's your beloved family doctor providing the information, and even more challenging for those for whom English may not be their first language. Only about 12% of adults in the United States have good health literacy, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

These health literacy challenges can lead to a host of issues including missed screenings; taking medication incorrectly; having a more difficult time

managing chronic health conditions; and visits to the emergency room that wouldn't have been necessary for a fully-informed senior.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

As scouts have said for over a century...be prepared. Health communications pioneer Helen Osborne founded Health Literacy Month in 1999.

Among her suggestions:

- Bring a notebook. Make a list of any symptoms before you go in, have questions written down, and take a few notes when your doctor is explaining things to you. Ask questions. To be certain of your path forward, repeat what your doctor has told you, in your own words.
- Bring a complete list of medications you take to the next appointment.
- Bring a friend or caregiver with you to your appointment, if possible.
- Ever heard of a patient navigator? They can work wonders, as guides through the healthcare system. Ask to work with a navigator or advocate, if one is available.
- Make sure you know who to call with any questions after you leave.

- Attend health education and successful aging programs at your local libraries, community center, or anywhere you can find them. If you're part of a group who would like to book an OFA speaker for an appearance, call 845-486-2555 or email bjones@dutchessny.gov.
- Don't believe everything you read on the internet.

Osborne also notes some disparities, and we've added our own thoughts:

- Results from the National Assessment of Adult Literacy demonstrated that Hispanic adults have the lowest average health literacy scores of all racial/ethnic groups. Keep in mind that OFA offers Language Line services to assure we can properly assist non-English-speaking and limited-English-speaking seniors, caregivers and others.
- People with low health literacy and limited English proficiency are twice as likely as individuals without these barriers to report poor health status.
- Some cultures share respect-based beliefs that affect individuals' ability to participate in their own health care, both for better and worse. These beliefs may lead to individuals not asking key questions in medical settings out of deference to a medical professional, leading to miscommunication

and misunderstanding of health-related information; on the other hand, those same beliefs can also be employed in the service of successful aging. As we've said in this column many times before, aging gracefully includes accepting help gracefully, whether that help comes from a medical professional or a family member.

Golden Living is prepared by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie, New York 12601, telephone 845-486-2555, email: ofa@dutchessny.gov website: www.dutchessny.gov/aging

SENIOR FRIENDSHIP CENTER VOLUNTEERS WANTED IN PLEASANT VALLEY

(and other Friendship Centers)

With the recent reopening of our Tri-Town Friendship Center at the First Presbyterian Church in Pleasant Valley (1576 Main St. (Route 44), next to the library construction project), we're in need of volunteers who can help the seniors now using the friendship center. Operating hours are 10am-2pm, Monday through Thursday. We'll work around your availability. If you can help one day a week, great. If you can help all four days...also great.

Click here for a printable volunteering form:

<https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Aging/Docs/volunteer-registration-form.pdf>

TAX VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT FOR 2022 FILING SEASON

The Hudson Valley CA\$H Coalition and AARP Foundation Tax-Aide needs volunteers to serve as tax preparers for the upcoming season.

Volunteers can help low and moderate-income neighbors receive free, reliable tax assistance and secure all the refunds and credits available to them. Volunteers get a great deal of satisfaction out of helping and it provides an opportunity for seniors to keep active. If you have prepared personal income taxes in the past and are looking for a rewarding way to use these skills, consider volunteering. There are many other volunteer opportunities that don't require specific tax expertise, including IT support, client facilitators, program promotion, marketing, and translation. Free training is provided with IRS certification. For more information, contact Linda Eddy at 845-475-7500 or leddy@dutchesscap.org.

UPCOMING DUTCHESS DBCH/MRC COVID VACCINE CLINICS

The Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health (DBCH), with Medical Reserve Corps of Dutchess County volunteers, are back with a series of COVID-19 vaccine clinic at the Poughkeepsie Galleria, at the former JCPenney site.

Pfizer, Moderna and J&J vaccines will be offered to those 12 years and older.

(Note: only Pfizer is available for ages 12-18.)

Upcoming JCPenney vaccination clinic dates include:

Saturday, 10/30 from 9am - 12pm

Thursday, 11/4 from 4pm - 7pm

Saturday, 11/13 from 9am - 12pm

Thursday, 11/18 from 4pm - 7pm

Walk-ins welcome. Clinics will offer first and second vaccine doses, as well as boosters for those who qualify. Residents seeking a second or booster dose of vaccine must bring their CDC vaccine card.

For more info on vaccination opportunities throughout the county visit:

www.DutchessNY.gov/COVIDvaccine

SAVE THE DATE - CAREGIVER CONFERENCE RE-SCHEDULED (Wed 5/25/2022)

The annual Caregiver Conference that was to have taken place on Thursday, November 18th has been postponed to Wednesday, May 25th, 2022.

In anticipation of pandemic precautions possibly lingering into next year, organizers are preparing for an event with a sheltered outdoor option.

The daylong, free event is taking place at The Grandview, 176 Rinaldi Blvd., Poughkeepsie. Registration for this event through the Alzheimer's Association is anticipated to begin on Monday, April 25th, 2022.

Other aging news online:

The science behind why Gen. Colin Powell died of “breakthrough” COVID complications last week at age 84:

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/10/18/why-powells-covid-19-vaccine-breakthrough-infection-was-deadly/>

A roundup of the reasons people with 845 or 914 area code phones will have to switch to 10-digit dialing starting on Sunday, October 24th:

<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/10-digit-calling-begins-in-Hudson-Valley-this-week-16546454.php?IPID=Times-Union-HP-Editors-Picks>

October is Residents' Rights Month, for residents of long-term care facilities:

<https://theconsumervoice.org/events/2021-residents-rights-month>

What's a QR code...and are they safe to use? (Short answer: mostly.)

https://seniorplanet.org/all-about-qr-codes/?utm_source=Senior+Planet+Email+List&utm_campaign=b7a0adea33-the-orbit_10-19-21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7aaa498d1b-b7a0adea33-419083417

Got any old concert T-shirts from the 60's or 70's? You may be sitting on a gold mine: <https://datebook.sfchronicle.com/music/grateful-dead-t-shirt-from-1967-sells-for-record-breaking-17640>

This week in senior birthdays:

10/25: Actress Marion Ross (93)

10/26: Bass guitarist/bandleader William “Bootsy” Collins (70)

10/27: Actor/comedian John Cleese (82)

10/28: Singer/actress Dame Cleo Laine (94)

10/29: Actor/activist Richard Dreyfuss (74)

10/30: Singer/songwriter Grace Slick (Jefferson Airplane/Starship) (82)

10/31: Journalist Dan Rather (90)

And of course, a Bad Joke:

I’ve started telling everybody about the benefits of eating dried grapes. It’s all about raisin awareness.